

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) A system for sharing information between one or more users engaged in analyzing data, comprising:

a data store storing a plurality of data objects;

a plurality of different one or more applications for manipulating editing the plurality of data objects, wherein each application performs a different type of editing;

an annotation store for storing one or more annotations created for annotating the plurality of data objects edited manipulated by the plurality of different one or more applications;

an annotation browser configured to access the annotation store and provide providing one or more graphical user interfaces for creating and viewing the one or more annotations for data manipulated by the one or more applications wherein the annotation browser is configured to display the one or more annotations and along with selectable links to associated at least one of the plurality of annotated data objects annotated by each annotation; and wherein selecting the any one of the selectable links to the associated data object causes an one of the plurality of different applications used to manipulate edit the associated respective data object[[s]] to be invoked.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9, wherein the annotation browser is configured to display data and indications of what displayed data has one or more corresponding annotations.

12. (Original) The system of claim 11, wherein the annotation browser is configured to display one or more annotation icons proximate to an annotated data object.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein:
at least one common annotation describes more than one data object; and
the annotation browser is configured to display a common annotation icon proximate to data objects described by the common annotation.
14. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the annotation browser is configured to display different annotation icons proximate to data objects described by different annotations.
15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9, wherein the annotation browser is configured to display a first annotation icon to indicate a displayed data object has a single annotation and a second annotation icon to indicate a displayed data object has multiple annotations.
16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9, wherein the annotation browser is configured to display a first portion of annotation data from an annotation, in response to a user positioning a cursor over an associated annotation icon.
17. (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the annotation browser is further configured to, in response to the user selecting the annotation icon, display a second portion of annotation data from the annotation.
18. (Original) The system of claim 17, wherein the annotation browser is further configured to, in response to the user selecting the annotation icon, retrieve the second portion of annotation data from the annotation store.
25. (Currently Amended) ~~A system for managing annotations for one or more different type data sources manipulated by one or more applications, comprising:~~
a data store storing a plurality of data objects;
a plurality of different applications for editing the plurality of data objects, wherein each application performs a different type of editing;

an annotation database ~~for~~ storing a plurality of annotations, wherein the plurality of annotations are stored separately from the plurality of data sources objects associated with the annotations;

a set of ~~annotatable~~ data object points defining , each data object point comprising an annotatable portion[[s]] of one of the plurality of data sources objects, wherein one or more of the set of data object points is annotated by one or more of the plurality of annotations ~~associated with the annotations described by the associated annotations~~;

a set of annotation structures, each defining a set of annotation fields selected to capture annotations of a specific type of data object point;

a set of plug-in components, each ~~for~~ interfacing between one or more annotation applications and an annotation server~~[[; and]]~~ , wherein the [[an]] annotation server is configured to: (i) receive, via the plug-in components, requests to access the plurality of annotations for one or more of the annotatable data object points , the requests issued by the one or more of the annotation applications running on the client computer and (ii) generate a graphical user interface screen, based on an annotation structure associated with the one or more of the annotatable set of data object points, for creating or viewing annotations for the one or more annotatable of the set of data object points; and

a browser application configured to browse the plurality of annotations in the annotation ~~store~~ database, wherein the browser application is configured to: (i) access the plurality of annotations in the annotation store independently of the annotation applications in which the plurality of annotations were created and (ii) display the plurality of annotations and along with selectable links to at least one annotated data object[[s]] point annotated by each annotation, wherein selecting any one of the selectable links to the associated data objects causes an one of the plurality of different applications used to manipulate edit the associated-respective annotated data object[[s]] point to be invoked.

26-35. (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims:

36. (New) A system, comprising:

an annotation server, comprising:

an annotation database storing a plurality of annotations;

a data store storing a plurality of data objects;

a set of data object points, each data object point being an annotatable portion of one of the plurality of data objects, wherein one or more of the set of data object points is annotated by one or more of the plurality of annotations;

a set of index tables indexing the one or more of the set of data object points annotated by the one or more of the plurality of annotations, wherein each index table corresponds to a different type of data object point;

a plurality of different applications for editing the plurality of data objects, wherein each application performs a different type of editing;

a set of annotation structures, each defining a set of annotation fields selected to capture annotations of a specific type of data object point, and each corresponding to a specific combination of user role and data scope; and

a set of administration tools configured for creating and modifying the set of annotation structures;

a client computer, comprising:

a set of plug-in components, each interfacing between one or more annotation applications and the annotation server, wherein the annotation server is configured to: (i) receive, via the plug-in components, requests to access the plurality of annotations, the requests issued by the one or more annotation applications and (ii) generate a graphical user interface screen, based on an annotation structure associated with one or more of the set of data object points, for creating or viewing annotations for one or more of the set of data object points;

an annotation broker managing messages passing between the annotation server and the set of plug-in components; and

a browser application configured to browse the plurality of annotations, wherein the browser application is configured to: (i) access the plurality of annotations independently of the annotation applications in which the plurality of annotations were created and (ii) display the plurality of annotations along with selectable links to at least one data object point annotated by each annotation, wherein selecting any one of the selectable links causes one of the plurality of different applications used to edit the respective annotated data object point to be invoked;

and

a communications network providing connectivity between the client computer and the annotation server.